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AUTHOR Dickson, Thomas V.; Sellmeyer, Ralph L.
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ABSTRACT

The question of whether there is a chasm between the newspaper profession and journalism education is not a new one. In a 1967 article titled "Green Eyeshades vs. Chi-Squares," Jake Highton indicated that journalists looked at journalism research as obscure and irrelevant. The study described in this paper investigated the extent of the gap between the attitudes of administrators of academic journalism programs and those of newspaper editors concerning what sort of content journalism schools should be providing their graduates. Subjects, 271 (of 388) heads of journalism/mass communication programs at colleges and universities, responded to a survey instrument similar to one returned by 381 newspaper editors in late 1989. Results indicated that: (1) a statistically significant difference was found between editors and journalism/mass communication administrators concerning the importance of key issues facing journalism education; (2) the perception of administrators differed based upon their area of specialization; (3) editors favored the more practical aspects of journalism as a priority in the journalism curriculum, while administrators favored the more theoretical aspects of mass communication. Findings suggest that a chasm does exist between journalism education and the newspaper profession and that it is a wide one. (Six tables of data are included; 53 references are attached.) (RS)

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Green Eyeshades vs. Chi Squares Revisited: Editors' and JMC Administrators' Perceptions of Major Issues in Journalism Education

Thomas V. Dickson and Ralph L. Sellmeyer
Southwest Missouri State University

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Abstract

The authors asked administrators of journalism/mass communication programs listed in the AEJMC catalog several questions about journalism education that the American Society of Newspaper Editors had asked newspaper editors in a study published in 1990 (Journalism Education: Facing Up to the Challenge of Change). The results indicated a considerable difference between how journalism/mass communication administrators and professionals viewed the content of JMC education and the need for curriculum change. The study suggests that the chasm that exists between journalism education and the newspaper profession is a wide one.

Green Eyeshades vs. Chi Squares Revisited: Editors' and JMC Administrators' Perceptions of Major Issues in Journalism Education

A recent study by the American Society of Newspaper Editors' Committee on Education for Journalism found "signs of dissatisfaction that should be troubling to both ASNE and the educators." (American Society of Newspaper Editors, 1990) The recent attacks upon journalism have gone well beyond the ASNE study, however. John Hartman (1990) noted that editors, unhappy with an "alleged drift" toward communication education, have set up a quasi-accrediting body. He concluded that working together was the only option for journalists and journalism professors.

Roger Van Ommeren (1991) reported that the March 1990 Texas Associated Press Managing Editors Convention in El Paso featured attacks on journalism education: in particular, the stress on doctorates in journalism programs and the priorities Ph.D.s give to research and publication over teaching.

Judith Wyatt (1991) noted that the ASNE report was the subject of heated discussion at the 1991 Colorado Press Association. Sherrie Mazingo (1991) called a press seminar with executive and managing editors that she attended meeting had "an atmosphere charged with more vitriol toward journalism schools as any I have seen." (p. 48) She wrote:

> (A) blanket indictment of all journalism faculty as "incompetents" is an unthinking, arrogant, and

> inaccurate statement that insults thousands of knowledgeable, highly qualified journalism educators.
>
> It is obvious that some editors and other newspeople subscribe to the motto that 'those who can, do; those who can't, teach.' (p. 40)

Bill McCorkle (1991) wrote about the rift between journalists and journalism educators, and a number of educators responded to Jack Hartman's call in the fall 1991 issue of the AEJMC Newspaper Division Leadtime for educators' thoughts on why journalists distain the type of research being undertaken by educators.

The question of whether there is a chasm between the newspaper profession and journalism education is not a new one. In a 1967 article titled "Green Eyeshades vs. Chi-Squares," Jake Highton indicated that journalists looked at journalism research as obscure and irrelevant. In his presidential address to the Association for Education in Journalism in 1967, Harold L. Nelson of the University of Wisconsin stated "some of our best-known critics have in recent months let fly with such balderdash as the following:

> "There is a death struggle going on between academic communicators and those who believe in teaching pragmatic journalism."

He disputed that statement and a 1964 comment by Malcolm MacLean, who wrote:

> There is an is an "either-or" character to journalism

> education today. You must be on the side of the great professionals and of experience in the field, or on the side of what is disparagingly called "the communicologists." (Nelson, p. 746)

In 1985, Dwight Teeter, then president of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, called the question of journalism education versus journalism training one of the three "demonic questions" facing journalism education. (p. 12)

Richard Cole (1985) criticized J-schools for not playing a larger role in helping the professional news media, while Neal Copple (1985) stated that "the communication age is pushing the practicing professionals and journalism educators closer and closer together." (p. 20) Richard Budd (1985) decrying the "split personality" of the profession, stated:

> We have and continue to manifest an unhealthy dependence upon and a timidity inspired by practitioners, making us susceptible to a variety of pushes and pulls. . . .
>
> Many criticisms of journalism education consider our schools parts factories forced to design their curricula through rear view mirrors. (p. 25)

W.G. Christ and R.O. Blanchard (1988) also discussed the need for professional education.

The ASNE study added fuel to the fire instead of helping bridging the chasm. Half of the editors surveyed by ASNE in its

study responded that they don't care whether their new hires have degrees in journalism. (ASNE, p. 1) The study, while not the only indication of trouble between professional journalists and academicians, suggests that--in contrast to Copple's conclusion--the split might not only be wide but growing.

The ASNE study, to which 381 editors responded, included several of the major topics facing the discipline: for example, the type of college graduates editors want, ways of improving journalism schools, the most useful courses for students, the place of advertising and public relations in journalism/mass communication schools, and whether sequences should be eliminated.

The major findings, according to the ASNE, were:

-- editors would have liked job candidates to have had more liberal arts.

-- recent journalism graduates don't rate high as far as writing, skills, spelling and grammar.

-- editors don't think much of mass communication courses.

-- editors think hiring more media professionals would do most to improve journalism education.

The battle lines seem to have formed with the communications, holistic curriculum on one side versus the industry-oriented sequence approach or, put another way, mass communication as a theoretical field of study versus journalism as a craft. As Ted Peterson, former dean of the College of Communications at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champagne, noted:

. . . (A) professional program in journalism is part

training, part education, and both parts are essential to the whole. The trick is to strike a happy balance between the two parts, and that's where the trouble starts, because the terms we use to describe the two parts wind up as something either pejorative or tendentious. (p. 4)

He added:

> To me, those two areas are the essential components of professional education in journalism. Without teaching the craft, we are simply teaching about journalism. And without the other, we are divorcing ourselves from the university itself and we are drifting into a narrow vocationalism." (p. 5)

Claude Sitton, editorial director and vice president of the News and Observer in Raleigh, commented about the situation:

> Trends in journalism education for the past few years have run counter to the best interests of students who aspire to careers on newspapers and magazines. The liberal arts base has been reduced, the communications theory content has been increased and professional courses in reporting and writing have been assigned with growing frequency to junior faculty. . . .
>
> Time heretofore devoted to the liberal arts is being chipped away to make room for courses in the relatively new discipline of communications. . . .
>
> The approach does make room in the curriculum for

> the speciality of those climbing the academic ladder toward a doctorate in the communications discipline. (p. 21)

In his conclusions about the ASNE survey, Robert H. Giles, editor and publisher of the Detroit News, noted about the signs of dissatisfaction:

> Such a conclusion can be drawn from the editors' overall rating of journalism schools (only 4 percent grade them A based on the quality of training their recent hires received), from the finding that half of the editors don't care whether their new hires have degrees in journalism or liberal arts, and from the inclination of editors to rate journalism graduates lowest in the skills editors think are most important: reporting, spelling and grammar, and journalism ethics. (p. 1)

Giles noted that the ASNE survey gave strong support to the concepts embodied in the accrediting system, particularly the emphasis on liberal arts and sciences.

The issue of the amount of liberal arts and sciences and sciences a student can take is crucial to the debate over the number of skills courses journalism graduates must have. Because of the 90/65 accreditation standard, students who take courses within the JMC schools that have non-skills, liberal arts components reduces the number of hours of skills courses they can take, because such courses can't be counted as liberal arts within the 65 required hours outside of the field. Requiring mass

communication courses also can cut down on the number of skills courses students can take.

The debate over mass communication as a discipline is focused on the holistic (also called "generic" or "integrated") curriculum issue proposed by the Oregon Report ("Planning for Curricular Change in Journalism Education") in 1984 and the Mullins Report ("Task Force Report on Liberal Arts and Sciences in Journalism/ Mass Communication") in 1987. Noting that normal entry-level jobs in reporting for print or broadcast media make up only 8 percent of the jobs taken by JMC graduates, the Mullins Report stated that such "statistics show us the folly of narrow, industrial-based training for our students." (Task Force, p. 4)

A related issue is the hiring of tenure-track faculty with doctorates in mass communication, many with limited background in teaching skills courses. Responding to a 1983 article attacking the journalism school curriculum by Everette Dennis, the person most responsible for the Oregon Report, Ben Bagdikian (1984) responded:

> Journalists cannot be competently trained by teachers whose only expertise is in theory, any more than surgeons or concert musicians can. Communication theorists cannot be competently trained by teachers whose sole expertise is in journalism. Both studies are important, but they are different. Communications-theory faculties are designed to produce promising teachers and researchers in communications theory.

> Journalism faculties are designed to produce promising journalism practitioners. Combining the two curriculums produces poor theorists and poor journalists. (p. 83)

Gerald Stone (1982) concluded that the difference in the amount of professional experience of journalism faculty with Ph.D.s and those without was not particularly wide. However, critics have concluded that the amount of professional experience of journalism faculty is an issue. Betty Medsger, chair of the Journalism Department at San Francisco State University, noted in her commentary on the ASNE study that the trend "is moving the teaching of journalism even farther from the journalists who have the most experience and knowledge to offer students." She added:

> This trend is threatening to undermine a basic principle of journalism education that has been supported by ASNE but not widely accepted by the academy: Journalism itself is a scholarship activity that merits evaluation and acceptance by the academy as a qualification for teaching." (ASNE, p. 15)

That point also was addressed by Jerry Ceppos (1990), managing editor of the San Jose Mercury News, who noted that a study by David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit (1988) found that approximately half of the JMC faculty hold a doctorate as compared to 80 percent of faculty overall. Ceppos questioned whether new faculty members with doctorates in mass communication have strong enough backgrounds to teach most journalism courses. He stated:

> Are universities declining to recognize the scholarly

> qualifications -- in research, writing, critical thinking, clear expression and visual aesthetics -- of highly skilled journalists to teach the courses that constitute the heart and major substance of journalism education? (p. 17)

Steve Weinberg (1990), reporting upon his assignment to cover the AEJMC convention in Minneapolis, commented on the phenomenon of journalism schools being dominated by Ph.D.s, noting that it leads to an "us versus them mentality." Weinberg, a freelance writer and a professor at the University of Missouri School of Journalism, added:

> At some large journalism schools that question is of little concern. Their faculties contain a mix of both Ph.D.s and long-time newsroom practitioners. The theorists tend to teach the theory courses, and the practitioners teach the writing and editing courses.
>
> But many, probably most, journalism programs have smaller faculties where Ph.D.s predominate and try to theory and practice, no matter how unprepared they may be to teach the latter. Preparation time is limited anyway if they want to attain tenure. (p. 27)

In a 1991 article, Weinberg wrote:

> What administrators fail to understand is that few first-rate journalists hold Ph.D.'s or have any desire to earn one once they've joined an institution's faculty. At the same time, many academics with

> doctorates in journalism have little or no experience working in a newsroom, except possibly for summer internships. This makes it difficult for them to teach students the skills they need to function in news operations. (p. B-1)

James Henningham (1986) wrote that in other fields of study the best students become scholars; however, the best journalism students usually become journalists. He noted about the gap between the practical and theoretical approaches:

> All disciplines have their specialisms and traditions and a common corpus of literature in which exponents of various schools are versed, but for journalism as a discipline the traditions seem absurdly far apart. The common focus -- mass media, and in particular news -- seems too broad to be a unifying concept for academic theorizing and skills-training. (p. 8)

Henningham noted that journalism developed without any help from the university and the establishment of journalism schools has not been "as advanced" as in other professions. "Journalism academics have come late into the field -- and are still regarded as irrelevant by many practitioners," he wrote. (p. 9) He continued:

> The tragedy for journalism educators in willingly identifying themselves as simply the teachers of practical skills to would-be journalists is that they become largely irrelevant to journalism the

occupation. (p. 10)

Bob Rayfield (1992) commented about journalism education's need for relevancy with the professions:

> . . . I certainly agree . . . that loss of relevance to the industry is a ticket to oblivion. Most of AEJMC's activities would falter if we did not get economic support from publishers.
>
> Worse yet, if we go far enough out in left field, what we teach will no longer be relevant to journalism and mass communication careers, which would take away our raison d'etre. (p. 5)

Professionals suggest that the Ph.D.s were hired to do research, and that the research often is irrelevant. Henningham (1986) touches on that point:

> . . . In other disciplines, what is taught is a subset of what researched and theorized. In journalism much of what is taught is a distilled version of what is practices by media professionals -- who may have mastered their skills without academic assistance.
>
> For journalism teachers, scholarship is to some extend a byproduct, an activity to justify their status as academics. As a paradigm, therefore, journalism is in an ambiguous role. (p. 8)

J.C. Schweitzer (1985) called for more practical research, Weinberg (1990) commented on why journalism professionals did not read research by journalism educators. He stated about papers

presented at the 1990 AEJMC convention: "Many of the papers discussed obscure or thumbsucking topics, were poorly organized, boringly written, and filled with grammatical, spelling, and factual errors." (p. 27) Delores Jenkins and Randy Beam discussed the topic in a Leadtime column by Jack Hartman (1991, Spring).

In a letter to the editor of Newspaper Research Journal, Beverly Barnum (1987), corporate director of market research for Harte-Hanks Communications, wrote about the contents of the journal -- which, unlike Journalism Quarterly or Journalism Educator, deals exclusively with newspaper topics:

> I believe the reason for the Newspaper Research Journal's lack of usefulness can be oversimplified to a single cause. The contributing researchers are not writing about topics that help me in solving daily problems. (p. 91)

Weinberg (1990) noted that Jim Willis of Ball State University in his book Journalism: State of the Art stated that researchers and professionals do not admit that they need each other. Willis wrote:

> Each side is cautious, and each, unsure. You will not find the close ties that exist in other professions . . . . Instead, working journalists are fond of declaring that media researchers are out of touch with reality, while researchers accuse the working media of striking the classic ostrich pose -- head in the sand -- and refusing to advance with the times. (Weinberg, p. 28)

Weinberg noted that "(t)he situation is unlikely to improve unless universitywide and journalism school administrators understand what their academic mindsets are doing to the craft." (p. 28)

One area of research that is ultimately practical for newspapers is press criticism. Ralph L. Crossman (1934) called for press criticism by journalism educators in 1934. In 1948 Paul Lazarsfeld commented about the lack of such criticism, while in 1974 Herbert Strentz and others concluded that the record of media criticism was weak. Research by Michael Ryan (1978) determined that such criticism is infrequent. Ryan (1979) discussed the issue further.

Richard Cole, president of the AEJMC in 1982-83, stated in 1985 that criticism of journalism/mass communication schools has been a one-way affair, but shouldn't be:

> Professionals have generally not hesitated to criticize journalism education, but there has been hesitancy the other way. Schools could well provide valuable service to all concerned by producing a body of enlightened, caring evaluation and criticism of the professional media. (p. 6)

Everette E. Dennis, A.N. Romm and James Ottaway Jr. (1990) suggested that collaborative efforts can be built around press criticism and that such efforts may lead to new respect between the journalism and professions. They wrote:

> This criticism should engage students of journalism and their professors in a fashion that brings them into

> direct contact with America's newsrooms. The result could be valuable regular assessments of the performance of local newspapers as well as media groups and large information companies. It could engage the best instincts of those in the academy who want to link knowledge and action. . . . Perhaps out of such mutual cooperation would emerge mutual respect between people who often have been suspicious and distrustful of each other, but who should be exchanging useful ideas and information. (p. 4)

Melvin Mencher (1990) stated that the attack on journalism education comes from four directions: editors who don't like the quality of graduates, colleagues in other fields who consider journalism schools as trade schools, journalists who state that journalism education is not relevant to the practice of journalism, and from other journalism faculty. He notes calls from such journalism luminaries as Ted Koppel to close down journalism schools and from editors who proclaim that they hire only graduates with liberal arts degrees, preferably from Ivy League schools.

The attack, Mencher responds, is based upon contradictions. Critics charge that journalism education is too broad and too trade-oriented. Faculty in other fields don't give journalism the respect they give to other vocational schools--such as law, business and medicine--but they admire journalism students for their thinking and working habits. He notes:

> We try too hard, make too many demands upon

> ourselves and our colleagues in journalism. . . . .
>
> We take in students who have been victimized by a failing educational system and we blame ourselves when we fail to create Renaissance people, and when our critics attack the value of journalistic training on the campus we become defensive.
>
> Instead, we should be speaking out about the importance to society of our work. . . . (pp. 67 & 96)

Douglas Ann Newsom (1985) suggested that among the problems facing journalism/mass communication as a discipline are the lack of a "solid theoretical base" and "the failure of the mass communication components with ties in specific industries to establish themselves as professions." She added: "Neglecting to remedy these problems clouds the future the entire field of journalism/mass communication." (p. 23)

Weinberg (1990) concluded that some educators want to narrow the gap between academe and the newsroom. But he notes that "many newsroom professionals are far less optimistic than I, seeing not a glimmer of hope in the evidence I have presented. For the sake of journalism's future, I hope they are mistaken." (p. 28)

Literature Review

While considerable evidence suggests that the newspaper profession and journalism schools are at odds, little research has been published to determine how great the chasm is between them. As Weaver and Wilhoit (1988) noted, most studies of journalism and mass communication education has been based upon

"anecdotes and impressions. " (p. 7)

Some research has looked at the perceptions of newspaper publishers and editors toward journalism education. Haskins (1970) studied the informational needs of publishers as a basis for future research. He sampled 253 publishers, 63 percent of whom responded. The greatest number of publishers (70 percent) listed mechanical/production and personnel as a great informational need, while about half stated that newspaper image, journalism education, and research were areas of great need.

The debate over Highton's 1967 article led Sanders (1972) to develop a study of various types of editors at 105 newspapers. He received 51 usable questionnaires based upon 49 statements about journalism research. Only one editor responding had a obvious negative attitude about journalism research, but Sanders concluded that sample was biased because editors who were not positive to academic research about newspapers did not respond.

Jones (1978) compared responses of 75 editors and 26 college journalism instructors in Pennsylvania and concluded that they agreed closely on what makes a good daily newspaper employee. Findings by Mills, Harvey and Warnick (1980) support the ASNE finding that a gap exists between editors and educators on the output of journalism schools, however. They asked editors at daily and weekly newspapers a number of questions about the competencies of graduates and the content of journalism education. They received 277 responses from the 666 newspapers surveyed. The authors concluded that editors were "disgusted" at journalism

school graduates' lack of grammar, punctuation and spelling skills and that J-schools should provide students with training that better meets the needs of the newspaper profession.

That finding was supported in a study of 266 editors by Shelly (1985), who found that a course in applied grammar and usage for writers was the elective that editors most wished journalism students would take, with 73.3 percent of editors listing it as important.

Several studies have looked at educators' attitudes toward research and curriculum content. VanderMeer and Lyons (1978) found that three out of five journalism faculty members preferred that half or less of their students' time be taken up with liberal studies. They also noted a trend since a 1958 survey for journalism faculty to favor social sciences courses over natural sciences and humanities for liberal arts courses.

Fedler and Smith (1985) surveyed members of the American Society of Journalism School Administrators to find out what types of research they considered most valuable and determined that several administrators were attempting to change their institution's definition of research to allow credit for professional journalism activities.

Weaver and Wilhoit (1988) found that twice as many JMC educators favored an industry-based sequence approach as favored a "generic" (holistic) approach to curriculum with almost half of the educators surveyed favoring some sort of combination. They found no significant difference based upon whether the faculty

member's institution was accredited.

Some studies have investigated the gap between professionals and educators. Ryan (1978) looked at the gap on one issue: press criticism. Ryan surveyed deans of 66 journalism school with at least one accredited sequence, 66 faculty members, and 61 newspaper editors. He found that the groups were in substantial agreement about the role and responsibilities of journalism schools regarding press criticism, but some differences were statistically significant.

David Jones (1978) surveyed editors at 104 daily newspapers in Pennsylvania and educators at seven institutions offering journalism or communications degrees to determine what they thought were most important of competencies for a newsroom employee. He found that the editors and educators agreed closely as to what a good daily newspaper employee's competencies should be.

Gaddis (1981) sent questionnaires to 327 editors of daily newspaper with less than 100,000 circulation and the 63 heads of ACEJ-accredited news/editorial sequences. A total of 127 editors and 32 educators responded. He hypothesized that "journalism educators would register higher mean agreement than editors that the level of perceived and expected skills of news-editorial graduates were adequate for beginning reporters" and that "on matters pertaining to the professionalization of journalism education along the lines of schools of law and medicine, that educators would show higher mean agreement than would editors."

Both hypotheses were supported. Educators and editors differed significantly on 46 percent of the items on the survey pertaining to quality of journalism graduates and perceived roles of journalism education, professionalization of journalism education and the preferred organization of journalism schools.

A survey by the Associated Press Managing Editors Association of 1900 journalism faculty found that around half of the educators felt there was "antipathy or estrangement between themselves and the working press." (Mabrey, 1988)

Possibly the most ambitious study on journalism/mass communication curriculum was released in 1984 by the Project on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education, the so-called Oregon Report. One of its goals was to suggest a model curriculum to "(1) accommodate and generate new knowledge, (b) accommodate technological change, and (c) be aware of the personnel needs of the communications industries." (p. v) It consulted journalism/mass communication educators, scholars outside of the discipline, members of professional and industry organizations, and others. It, however, did not undertake a nationwide survey.

The Oregon Report found the state of JMC education as "dismal." It made recommendations about accreditation, structure, mission, curricular change, technology, faculty and staffing, and students. Everette Dennis, the head of the project, noted that the report made two major proposals:

(1) that journalism and communication schools make their

programs more holistic and more unified; and

(2) that they give much more attention to consumer courses for non-majors as well as midcareer training programs for professionals. (p. 61).

The News Editorial Task Force of the Task Force on the Future of Journalism and Mass Communication Education (1989) looked at news-editorial curriculum issues. Instead of a national survey, it opted to base its report upon responses to personal letters by 21 educators and 29 professionals. Responses touched upon some of the major issues: that a strong liberal arts background is important for J-school graduates, that non-journalism courses taken by journalism students should be assessed, that journalism schools should choose students more carefully, that students should be instructed in management, that design and graphics are important, and that internships are important.

Research Questions

The research questions for the study was: "Is there a gap between administrators of journalism programs and editors about what journalism schools should be providing their graduates?" The main hypothesis was:

A statistically significant difference between editors and journalism/mass communication program administrators will be found concerning the importance of key issues facing journalism education.

The authors suspected that perceptions of JMC administrators would differ based upon their area of specialization, with

responses of administrators having a news-editorial specialization being more like those of editors. Therefore, the second hypothesis was constructed:

> Perceptions of JMC administrators with a news-editorial specialization will be more like the perceptions of editors than will those of administrators with some other area of specialization.

The authors wanted to determine if the nature of the gap between editors and JMC administrators. Though they thought other gaps might exist as well, they expected that a gap would exist over the more-practical aspects of journalism versus the broader, more-theoretical aspects of mass communication. Thus, the third hypothesis was proposed:

> Editors will favor the more-practical aspects of journalism as a priority in JMC curriculum, while JMC administrators will favor the more-theoretical aspects of the field of mass communication as a priority.

To test the hypothesis, three questions were selected as representative of the more-practical aspects of journalism and three were selected as representative of the broader, more-theoretical aspects of the JMC curriculum, both research and the concept of mass communication as a field of study.

The editors were expected to be more likely to have the following priorities: more media professionals on the faculty, more emphasis on the nuts and bolts of journalism, and more

visiting professionals from the media. The administrators were expected to be more likely to have the following priorities: educating students in mass communication concepts as well as the fundamentals of journalism, providing an overview of the fields of mass communication for JMC graduates, and putting more emphasis on research.

Research Procedure

The sample of educators surveyed consisted of the heads of journalism/mass communication programs at colleges and universities listed in the directory of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Of the 388 names of administrators on a computer listing obtained from the AEJMC, eight were omitted because they were not heads of an undergraduate journalism/mass communication program. Surveys consisting of 38 questions were mailed in early June 1991, and those program heads who had not responded were sent a follow-up letter in early August. Cut-off date for return of the questionnaire was November 1, 1991. Of the 380 educators surveyed, 271 (71.3 percent) responded before November 1, 1991. The main independent variable used for the present study was whether the administrator had a news-editorial specialization. The instrument sent the administrators was similar to the one the ASNE sent to editors in late 1989. That survey was mailed to 600 editors selection in a disproportionate stratified sample of 200 editors in each of three circulation categories: over 100,000, 25,000-100,000, and under 25,000. A total of 381 responses were received, a 64 percent

return rate. The middle-sized papers had the highest return rate (79 percent), followed by the largest newspapers (62 percent), and the smallest (50 percent).

The Respondents

Most of the educators (61.8 percent) were responsible for a department, 15.3 percent for a school, 5.8 percent for a college, 5.3 percent for a division, and 11.8 percent for some other type of JMC unit. A total of 56.5 percent of respondents listed news-editorial as an area of specialization, while 43.5 percent did not.

For most of the institutions represented (58 percent) the highest degree offered was a bachelor's degree, while 30 percent offered a master's degree and 9 percent a doctorate. Three percent offered no degree. While only 28.1 percent of the institutions were accredited by the ACEJMC, another 29.7 percent planned to seek accreditation within the next five years.

The Findings

Comparison of Editors and JMC Administrators Overall. Table 1 is a comparison the percent of editors and all JMC administrators agreeing with the 21 concepts. Fifteen of the chi square

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Insert Table 1 about here

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computations for the concepts were statistically significant at the .05 level or above (with 12 of them significant at the .001 level), indicating those responses were statistically unalike. As Table 1 indicates, the two groups were most alike in stating that

media economics was a priority course for students to take and were most unalike in stating whether educating students in mass communication concepts was a high priority for JMC programs. The Spearman rho correlation for the rankings of the 21 concepts was .287, not significant at the .05 level of confidence. Thus the two groups' rankings of the concepts were not statistically similar.

Comparison of Editors and News/Editorial Administrators. Table 2 is a comparison the percent of editors and JMC administrators with a news-editorial specialization (hereafter referred to as news/editorial administrators) agreeing with the concept. Thirteen of the chi square computations for the 21

Insert Table 2 about here

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concepts were statistically significant at the .05 level or above (with 12 of them significant at the .001 level), indicating those responses were statistically unalike. As Table 2 indicates, the two groups were most alike in stating that marketing research was a priority course for students to take and were most unalike in stating whether educating students in mass communication concepts was a high priority for JMC programs. The Spearman rho correlation for the rankings of the 21 concepts was .414, significant at the .05 level of confidence. Thus the two groups' rankings of the concepts were similar.

Comparison of Editors and Non-News/Editorial Administrators. Table 3 is a comparison the percent of editors and JMC

administrators with specializations other than news-editorial (hereafter referred to as non-news/editorial administrators) agreeing with the concept. Sixteen of the chi square

Insert Table 3 about here

computations for the 21 concepts were statistically significant at the .05 level or above (with 14 of them significant at the .001 level), indicating those responses were statistically unalike. As Table 3 indicates, the two groups were most alike in stating that media economics was a priority course for students to take and were most unalike in stating whether educating students in mass communication concepts was a high priority for JMC programs. The Spearman rho correlation for the rankings of the 21 concepts was .240, not significant at the .05 level of confidence. Thus the two groups' rankings of the concepts were not statistically similar.

Table 4 compares responses of news/editorial and non-news/editorial administrators. The responses of the two groups of

Insert Table 4 about here

administrators were statistically similar on all but four issues: whether research was a priority, whether marketing and audience research was a priority course, whether the media should be seen as interrelated, and whether advertising belongs in the JMC program. They were most alike in agreeing that better students

were a priority and most unalike in stating that research was a priority. The rankings of the responses of the two groups for the 21 issues were statistically similar at the .01 level of confidence (rho = .894).

Three of the questions about JMC program structure were among the five responses that were most unalike: whether the media should be seen as interrelated, whether advertising belongs, and whether sequences should be eliminated. Both groups were quite strong in their support for having public relations in the JMC program, however, with nearly 90 percent of both groups in support of public relations.

Comparison of Editors and Administrators by Issue Area. To determine whether editors and JMC administrators were more alike on some issue areas than on others, the 21 issues were divided into three categories: theoretical and practical issues, issues of course content, and administrative issues. For each of the three practical issues, a larger percent of editors than of administrators stated that it was a priority. For each of the three theoretical areas, a larger percent of administrators stated that it was a priority. (See Table 5.) A statistically significant

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Insert Table 5 about here

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difference was found between editors and administrators on all issues except for research, where a minority of editors (34.9 percent) and administrators (41.5 percent) stated that it was a priority.

For each of the six courses investigated, administrators were more likely than editors to state it was a high priority, though the difference was not statistically significant for audience and marketing research, media management, and media economics.

A majority of editors favored all the proposed courses except for journalism history (43.0 percent), which was seen as a priority by 82.6 percent by administrators. The two courses that the highest percent of editors thought were priorities were journalism ethics and journalism law. More editors (91.1 percent) stated that an ethics course was a high priority than gave that response for law (76.9 percent). On the other hand, administrators favored the two courses about equally (96.4 percent for ethics and 96.1 percent for law).

For each of the eight administrative issues, a higher percent of administrators than editors thought it was a priority. The difference was statistically significant for all the issues except for making tougher grading and better students a priority. Editors' top priority among the administrative issues was to keep the present commitment to liberal arts and sciences (favored by 91.1 percent), and their lowest priority was to eliminate sequences in JMC schools (favored by 20.1 percent).

A minority of editors responding stated that advertising (49.4 percent) and public relations (47.8 percent) belong in the JMC schools and that journalism schools should look at all media as interdependent and interrelated (48.2 percent). A majority of administrators favored all of those issues except for eliminating

sequences, favored by only 37.7 percent.

Table 6 shows differences between editors and administrators based upon issue area. For all three questions seen as relating

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Insert Table 6 about here

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to the issue of whether journalism education should be practical, a larger percentage of editors favored the concept than did news/editorial administrators or non-news/editorial administrators. The only statistically similar response was that editors and non-news/editorial administrators both stated that visiting media professionals were a priority. A majority of editors and news/editorial administrators also agreed on that question, but the difference in their responses was statistically significant. A considerable gap was seen for the questions of teaching nuts and bolts courses and hiring more media professionals.

Both groups of administrators rated educating students in mass communication concepts as well as the fundamentals of journalism and providing an overview of the fields of mass communication higher than did editors, and in both cases the difference was statistically significant. Significantly more non-news/editorial administrators than editors stated that research was a priority, but somewhat fewer news/editorial administrators than editors gave that response.

Respondents were asked whether six courses (audience and marketing research; and media history, economics, ethics, law, and

management) were a priority. A statistically significant difference in responses of editors and news/editorial administrators was found only for two courses (media history and media law), but a statistically significant difference between editors and non-news/editorial administrators was found on four of the six courses (audience and marketing research; media history, media ethics, and media law). A sightly larger percentage of editors than non-news/editorial administrators thought a media economics course was a priority, and a slightly larger percent of editors than news/editorial administrators thought an audience and marketing research course was a priority. Administrators were more likely than editors to think that the other courses were a priority.

Editors' and JMC administrators' responses were statistically similar on only two of eight administrative issues: the need for better students and the need for tougher grading. For all issues, a larger percent of administrators than editors thought that the issue was a priority. The broadest support overall was for maintaining the existing level of commitment to the liberal arts and sciences, and the least support was for eliminating sequences.

Discussion

The answer to the research question ("Is there a gap between administrators of journalism programs and editors about what journalism schools should be providing their graduates?") is "yes." While considerable common ground was found, the first hypothesis (that a statistically significant difference would be

found between editors and journalism/mass communication program administrators concerning the importance of key issues facing journalism education) was supported and the null hypothesis was rejected. The Spearman rho correlation of .287 for the ranking of responses by editors and administrators was not statistically similar.

Responses of the two groups were statistically similar only on six issues: putting a priority on better students, tougher grading, and courses in marketing and audience research, media management, and media economics and not putting a priority on research.

Despite lack of statistical similarity between responses, a majority of both editors and administrators were on the same side of all but the following six issues: whether mass communication concepts, an overview of mass communication fields, and media history were priorities, whether public relations and advertising belong in the JMC program, and whether the media should be seen as interrelated.

The second hypothesis was that perceptions of JMC administrators would differ based upon their area of specialization, with responses of administrators having a news-editorial specialization being more like those of editors. The hypothesis was supported, and the null hypothesis was rejected. The Spearman rho correlation for overall rankings of responses by editors and news/editorial administrators was .414, significant at the .05 level of confidence and thus similar, while the

correlation for rankings by editors and non-news/editorial administrators was .240, not statistically similar.

Responses by editors and news/editorial administrators for eight questions were statistically similar, while responses by editors and non-news/editorial administrators for only five questions were statistically similar. Responses by news/editorial and non-news/editorial administrators were statistically similar for 17 questions, and the Spearman rho correlation for all 21 responses was .894, significant at the .01 level of confidence and thus similar.

The third hypothesis was that editors would favor the more-practical aspects of journalism as a priority in JMC curriculum, while JMC administrators would favor the more-theoretical aspects of mass communication as a priority. That hypothesis was supported, as well, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

All three correlations based upon practical issues were statistically significant, and two of three correlations upon theoretical issues were statistically significant. Both editors and JMC administrators stated that research was not a priority. News/editorial administrators' and editors responses were similar only for the research question, while non-news/editorial administrators' and editors' responses were similar only for favoring visiting professionals.

Conclusions

As expected, a gap was found between JMC administrators and editors. While the differences between editors and administrators

with a news-editorial specialization were not as great as the differences between editors and administrators with other backgrounds, that gap was far from being overcome, as well. Moreover, other gaps were found. Editors were much more likely than administrators to want practical courses, but editors and administrators with news/editorial specialization were more likely to agree about the importance of research than were news/editorial administrators and non-news/editorial administrators.

The most divisive gap appears to be over what should comprise the JMC school. Stated another way, it is over whether there should be JMC schools at all. A majority of editors, albeit a small majority, reject the concept of the holistic JMC curriculum. That is shown in the strong support for retention of sequences and the desire of a majority of editors that advertising and public relations not be a part of the J-school curriculum.

That only 41 percent of editors in the ASNE study preferred journalism school (not mass communication school) graduates and that half the editors had no preference should be a sobering message for JMC administrators and faculty alike. Editors at newspapers at all sizes prefer that students have more coursework in such fields as history, the arts, the social sciences, and the physical sciences.

Editors' strong support for liberal arts and sciences is itself somewhat of an anomaly because they also say they also want J-school graduates to have more nuts and bolts courses. That would require cutting something, and editors most likely would opt

for cutting the more-theoretical mass communication courses. The results of the ASNE study should cause JMC administrators and faculty to reassess their programs and their priorities, something the Oregon Report stated that few JMC schools had done at that time.

What can be done to bridge the rift between journalism education and the newspaper editors? First, educators need to come to some conclusion on the merits of the sequence-oriented versus holistic curriculum and whether there is room for both. While any move toward a more-holistic curriculum and away from a sequence-oriented curriculum likely would be met with dismay by editors, it is evident that they aren't particularly satisfied with the present product either. Smaller newspapers want entry-level graduates with good practical skills, while larger newspapers want graduates with a broad education. Other communication professions have different needs. Graduate schools want students with a theoretical focus. JMC schools are being pulled in every direction.

Extraordinary times cause for extraordinary solutions. Perhaps JMC schools should consider more options for students rather than fewer, with an emphasis on more specialties rather than fewer. If no solutions are forthcoming, more newspapers will be going elsewhere for their new hires while JMC schools continue on their way to becoming schools of mass communication cut off from the professions they were designed to serve.

Table 1

Comparison of Editors and of JMC Administrators Overall Who Favored Each Concept

	ASNE	JMC Admin.	Chi square	Sig.	V
Mass comm concepts a priority	43.0%	89.4%	138.24	.001	.467
Mass comm overview a priority	38.1%	81.7%	117.20	.001	.430
PR belongs in JMC	47.8%	89.1%	107.60	.001	.430
Media history a priority	43.0%	82.6%	98.25	.001	.394
Media as interrelated	48.2%	79.4%	56.87	.001	.321
More resources a priority	68.0%	94.4%	61.68	.001	.313
Advertising belongs in JMC	49.4%	80.0%	55.91	.001	.310
Faculty salaries a priority	55.9%	85.4%	59.13	.001	.307
Media law a priority	76.9%	96.1%	43.10	.001	.260
More media pros a priority	92.1%	73.5%	40.13	.001	.253
More nuts/bolts a priority	81.9%	59.8%	36.94	.001	.243
Favor eliminating sequences	20.1%	37.7%	21.66	.001	.195
Liberal arts a priority	91.1%	96.5%	7.18	.01	.106
Media ethics a priority	91.1%	96.4%	6.55	.02	.102
Visiting pros a priority	81.9%	74.0%	5.60	.02	.094
Marketing research a priority	50.9%	58.4%	3.40	-	.073
Better students a priority	76.9%	82.7%	3.05	-	.070
Research a priority	34.9%	41.5%	2.73	-	.066
Tougher grading a priority	73.0%	76.4%	0.94	-	.039
Media management a priority	60.9%	63.5%	0.41	-	.026
Media economics a priority	61.9%	62.9%	0.05	-	.009

Note. Spearman rho = .287, not signif. at .05 confidence level.

Table 2

Comparison of Editors and of JMC Administrators with News-Editorial Specialization Favoring Each Concept

	ASNE	News-Ed	Chi square	Sig.	V
Mass comm concepts a priority	43.0%	86.7%	80.10	.001	.391
Media history a priority	43.0%	86.4%	77.74	.001	.386
PR belongs in JMC	47.8%	88.7%	69.71	.001	.382
Mass comm overview a priority	38.1%	80.4%	74.61	.001	.377
Media law a priority	76.9%	96.5%	40.68	.001	.279
Faculty salaries a priority	55.9%	84.9%	36.98	.001	.267
More resources a priority	68.0%	92.8%	32.79	.001	.251
Media as interrelated	48.2%	73.3%	23.94	.001	.234
Advertising belongs in JMC	49.4%	74.8%	25.39	.001	.231
More media pros a priority	92.1%	75.7%	25.05	.001	.220
More nuts/bolts a priority	81.9%	63.5%	19.24	.001	.193
Favor eliminating sequences	20.1%	36.0%	13.10	.001	.169
Visiting pros a priority	81.9%	73.7%	4.16	.05	.090
Liberal arts a priority	91.1%	95.8%	3.36	-	.080
Media ethics a priority	91.1%	94.8%	1.91	-	.061
Better students a priority	76.9%	82.5%	1.85	-	.060
Tougher grading a priority	73.0%	77.4%	1.01	-	.044
Media economics a priority	61.9%	65.9%	0.70	-	.037
Research a priority	34.9%	31.2%	0.64	-	.035
Media management a priority	60.9%	62.4%	0.10	-	.014
Marketing research a priority	50.9%	50.0%	0.03	-	.008

Note. Spearman rho = .414, significant at .05 confidence level.

Table 3

Comparison of Editors and of JMC Administrators with Non-News-Editorial Specialization Favoring Each Concept

	ASNE	Non-NewsEd	Chi square	Sig.	V
Mass comm concepts a priority	43.0%	92.4%	80.59	.001	.407
Mass comm overview a priority	38.1%	83.5%	66.37	.001	.368
PR belongs in JMC	47.8%	89.6%	57.86	.001	.362
Media as interrelated	48.2%	86.3%	50.63	.001	.348
Advertising belongs in JMC	49.4%	86.7%	45.78	.001	.321
Media history a priority	43.0%	77.9%	42.32	.001	.293
More resources a priority	68.0%	96.4%	36.28	.001	.271
More media pros a priority	92.1%	70.6%	35.25	.001	.268
More nuts/bolts a priority	81.9%	55.1%	32.80	.001	.259
Faculty salaries a priority	55.9%	86.0%	32.24	.001	.257
Media law a priority	76.9%	95.5%	19.63	.001	.200
Favor eliminating sequences	20.1%	39.6%	15.94	.001	.191
Research a priority	34.9%	54.6%	13.73	.001	.168
Marketing research a priority	50.9%	69.4%	11.67	.001	.154
Liberal arts a priority	91.1%	97.3%	4.95	.05	.100
Media ethics a priority	91.1%	98.2%	6.52	.02	.097
Visiting pros a priority	81.9%	74.3%	3.07	-	.079
Tougher grading a priority	73.0%	75.2%	2.17	-	.069
Better students a priority	76.9%	83.0%	1.82	-	.061
Media management a priority	60.9%	64.9%	0.57	-	.034
Media economics a priority	61.9%	59.3%	0.26	-	.023

Note. Spearman rho = .240, not signif. at .05 confidence level.

Table 4

Comparison of JMC Administrators with News/Editorial and with Non-News/Editorial Specialization Favoring Each Concept

	News/Ed	Non-News/Ed	Chi square	Sig.	V
Research a priority	31.2%	54.6%	13.74	.001	.236
Marketing research a priority	50.0%	69.4%	9.56	.01	.196
Media as interrelated	73.3%	86.3%	5.78	.02	.151
Advertising belongs in JMC	74.8%	86.7%	5.17	.05	.147
Media history a priority	86.4%	77.9%	3.23	-	.113
Mass comm concepts a priority	86.7%	92.4%	2.00	-	.090
Media ethics a priority	94.8%	98.2%	2.00	-	.090
More nuts/bolts a priority	63.5%	55.1%	1.75	-	.085
More resources a priority	92.8%	96.4%	1.51	-	.078
Media economics a priority	65.9%	59.3%	1.17	-	.068
More media pros a priority	75.7%	70.6%	0.81	-	.057
Liberal arts a priority	95.8%	97.3%	0.43	-	.041
Mass comm overview a priority	80.4%	83.5%	0.37	-	.038
Favor eliminating sequences	36.0%	39.6%	0.34	-	.037
Media management a priority	62.4%	64.9%	0.17	-	.026
Tougher grading a priority	77.4%	75.2%	0.15	-	.024
Media law a priority	96.5%	95.5%	0.15	-	.024
Faculty salaries a priority	84.9%	86.0%	0.05	-	.014
PR belongs in JMC	88.7%	89.6%	0.05	-	.014
Visiting pros a priority	73.7%	74.3%	0.02	-	.009
Better students a priority	82.5%	83.0%	0.01	-	.005

Note. Spearman rho = .894, significant at .01 level of confidence.

Table 5

Comparison of Editors' and JMC Administrators' Responses by Issue Area

	ASNE	JMC Admin.	Chi square	Sig.	V
Theoretical Issues					
Mass comm concepts a priority	43.0%	89.4%	138.24	.001	.467
Mass comm overview a priority	38.1%	81.7%	117.20	.001	.430
Research a priority	34.9%	41.5%	2.73	-	.066
Practical Issues					
More media pros a priority	92.1%	73.5%	40.13	.001	.253
More nuts/bolts a priority	81.9%	59.8%	36.94	.001	.243
Visiting pros a priority	81.9%	74.0%	5.60	.02	.094
Priority Courses					
Media history a priority	43.0%	82.6%	98.25	.001	.394
Media law a priority	76.9%	96.1%	43.10	.001	.260
Media ethics a priority	91.1%	96.4%	6.55	.02	.102
Marketing research a priority	50.9%	58.4%	3.40	-	.073
Media management a priority	60.9%	63.5%	0.41	-	.026
Media economics a priority	61.9%	62.9%	0.05	-	.009

Table 5 (Continued)

Comparison of Editors' and JMC Administrators' Responses by Issue Area

Administrative Issues					
PR belongs in JMC	47.8%	89.1%	107.60	.001	.430
Media as interrelated	48.2%	79.4%	56.87	.001	.321
More resources a priority	68.0%	94.4%	61.68	.001	.313
Advertising belongs in JMC	49.4%	80.0%	55.91	.001	.310
Faculty salaries a priority	55.9%	85.4%	59.13	.001	.307
Favor eliminating sequences	20.1%	37.7%	21.66	.001	.195
Liberal arts a priority	91.1%	96.5%	7.18	.01	.106
Better students a priority	76.9%	82.7%	3.05	-	.070
Tougher grading a priority	73.0%	76.4%	0.94	-	.039

Table 6

Comparisons by Issue Area of V Scores Indicating Differences in Priorities of Editors and Administrators

	ASNE	News-Ed	V	Non-News-Ed	V
		Theoretical Issues			
Mass comm concepts	43.0%	86.7%	.391**	92.4%	.407**
Mass comm overview	38.1%	80.4%	.377**	83.5%	.368**
More research	34.9%	31.2%	.035	54.6%	.168**
		Practical Issues			
More media pros	92.1%	75.7%	.220**	70.6%	.268**
More nuts/bolts	81.9%	63.5%	.193**	55.1%	.259**
More visiting pros	81.9%	73.7%	.090*	74.3%	.079
		Priority Courses			
Media ethics	91.1%	94.8%	.061	98.2%	.097*
Media law	76.9%	96.5%	.279**	95.5%	.200**
Media economics	61.9%	65.9%	.037	59.3%	.023
Media management	60.9%	62.4%	.014	64.9%	.034
Marketing research	50.9%	50.0%	.008	69.4%	.154**
Media history	43.0%	86.4%	.386**	77.9%	.293**

Table 6 (Continued)

Comparisons by Issue Area of V Scores Indicating Differences in Priorities of Editors and Administrators

Administrative Issues					
Liberal arts a priority	91.1%	95.8%	.080	97.3%	.100*
Better students a priority	76.9%	82.5%	.060	83.0%	.061
Tougher grading a priority	73.0%	77.4%	.044	75.2%	.069
More resources a priority	68.0%	92.8%	.251**	96.4%	.271**
Faculty salaries a priority	55.9%	84.9%	.267**	86.0%	.257**
Advertising belongs in JMC	49.4%	74.8%	.231**	86.7%	.321**
Media as interrelated	48.2%	73.3%	.234**	86.3%	.348**
PR belongs in JMC	47.8%	88.7%	.382**	89.6%	.362**
Favor eliminating sequences	20.1%	36.0%	.169**	39.6%	.191**

*** Significant at .001 level of confidence.

* Significant at .05 level of confidence.

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